Tools for Your Child's Success.org

Not Seeing Your Issue?

Age 18 Summary

Why Not Seeing Your Issue?

As you address any issues, you build the foundation for your teen's development.



Some examples of getting input from your teen are:

- *How do you feel about making that decision?*
- *What did you think you did well?*
- *What would you do differently next time?*
- *What motivates you to pursue this path?*
- *What could be some of the benefits of going this route? What are some of the downsides?*
- *What would it be if you wave a magic wand and make anything happen?*
- *Tell me more about why you feel that way.*
- *What makes you feel happy?*
- *What are you most proud of?*
- *What's been on your mind lately?*
- *What are the possible consequences of doing that?*
- *What is the worst thing that could happen if you break the rules? What's the best thing that could happen if you follow them?*
- *In what ways can I support you?*
- *I can see I am missing what you are trying to tell me. Tell me again, I want to understand.*
- *These are challenging emotions you are experiencing. Tell me more about how you are handling it.*
- *Tell me about some great and not-so-great ways you are handling this.*

- *It seems like something is troubling you. Are you open to sharing it with me?*
- *Say more about what's getting you down.*
- *Say more about what's got you distracted right now.*
- *You're right. Please tell me what you think is important for me to understand better.*
- *It feels like I can't relate to what you are going through. Tell me more so I can get it.*
- *Say more about what you are worried about.*
- *What are some downsides of going along with what your friends want?*
- *How do you navigate making a decision when you feel pressured by your friends?*
- *How can you talk to your friends about this? What could you say?*
- *What is your biggest fear about this situation?*
- *If another friend was in this situation, what advice would you give them?*



Here are some ways that you can teach new skills to your teen:

- *It sounds like you're going through a lot. Would you like me to just listen, or would you like us to brainstorm some ideas together on how you can solve the problem?*
- *Sometimes, these decisions feel overwhelming. What are your biggest concerns about doing this? Not doing this?*
- *I'd like to discuss some pros and cons of making one decision versus another. What do you think about that?*
- *I can see that you are telling yourself you can't do it, is that right?*
- *I have some ideas I would like to share if you are open to them.*
- *I have three ideas. Let me share them with you, and you can pick what works best for you.*
- *Let's brainstorm a few different ways to solve this, and then you can see what is best for you.*
- *What would the first part be if we broke this down into three parts?*
- *Telling yourself you can't do it can hurt your chance of meeting your goal. How can we turn that message around to help you?*
- *When was the last time you were in a similar situation? What was that like, and what did you do?*
- *It's hard to go against the grain. It will become more challenging to stand up for what you want, yet the rewards of doing so will also be more significant.*

- *You've overcome this kind of pressure before and made your own choices. Remember that time you _____? What did you do then that could apply now?*
- *When I get in these situations, knowing there are others around to support me is helpful. I am here for you.*



Here are some examples of ways you can practice with your teen:

- *What are some things that make you want to say yes in this situation? What are some things that make you want to say no?*
- *Let's say I'm a friend being negatively pressured by another friend to do the same thing. What advice would you give me?*
- *You wonder why your friend is asking you to do something that doesn't feel good, and you're unsure how to respond. Practice saying to me what you would like to tell your friend. It may not come out right the first time, but we will get there.*
- *You think if you make a different decision from your friends, they might leave you out in the future. How can you express that to them?*
- *You are weighing the decision to go along with your friends, and there are some pros and cons. Share with me what those are.*
- *Remember how you introduced yourself last week to a new friend? How can you use that experience here?*
- *It is easy to feel frustrated and want to give up. What can you say to yourself to keep going?*
- *Let's pause and do something different together and then return to this with fresh eyes.*
- *Imagine we are a month down the road. What would you be thinking about this situation?*



Here are some examples of how you can support your teen's development and success:

- *You have some concerns about proceeding with this choice, yet you also seem to sense that this is your best path.*
- *You're concerned about the long-term impact of this decision. It is awesome that you are thinking about the future like this.*

- *You're afraid you might not get the chance to reverse this decision if it's the wrong one for you. I can tell this means a lot to you.*
- *I noticed you spent extra time practicing today. Excellent.*
- *I know this is a challenging space for you, but I have seen you overcome challenges before and come out on top.*
- *I noticed you are thoughtful about considering your next steps. That shows real maturity, and you are doing a great job!*
- *I realize you took a risk in trying something new. I admire your decision to try an experience out of your comfort zone.*
- *Sometimes, it seems that I'm completely against what you want to do, and that doesn't feel good for you.*
- *You have made some good decisions this past year, and I trust that you will make a decision that doesn't hurt you or others.*
- *You are making decisions for yourself now, and they will have positive and negative consequences for you. I trust you will be thoughtful in how you approach these decisions.*
- *One of your best qualities is (reference example). That will come in handy in this situation.*
- *You should be proud of yourself for setting that boundary with your friend. I know that was a tough decision, but you see, you have different needs and goals.*



- Recognize small steps along the way. Don't wait for significant accomplishments—like the whole bedtime routine going smoothly—to recognize effort. Remember that your recognition can work as a tool to promote more positive behaviors. Find small ways your child/teen makes an effort and let them know you see them.
- Build celebrations into your routine. For example, after you've completed your bedtime routine, snuggle and read before bed. Or, in the morning, before you leave for work, take a few minutes to listen to music together.

Trap: It can be easy to resort to bribes when recognition and occasional rewards are underutilized. If parents or those in a parenting role frequently resort to bribes, it is likely time to revisit the five-step process.

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